

# VAMPIRES



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Foreword by  
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Introduction by  
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Aston**

**NEW  
EDITION**  
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More Info!  
More Photos!

A tribute to the  
ultimate in  
erotic horror  
cinema



# VAMPYRES

THE SPRING of 1974 was, for me, a time of discovery. My first year in secondary school was nearly over and I was starting to notice the opposite sex. Not so many miles away a movie was being made that would one day have a considerable effect on me. Like most nippers I enjoyed horror films, but even had I been aware of this particular one back then, it wasn't an extravagant production and it certainly didn't star anyone that I'd ever heard of; with my thoughts so lasciviously occupied I doubt I'd have paid it much heed (and in no way could I have known that years on I'd be working so hard in helping to immortalise it). After all, I was young and carefree, the air would soon be filled with the warm fragrance of Summer and another adventure-filled holiday lay on the horizon.

If my reminiscences of this period seem rose-tinted or sickly sweet, well maybe they are, but then isn't that the way the memory works its magic? My mind was unencumbered by those complexities that accompany adulthood. Life was good.

But I digress. The film in question was *Vampyres*, a low-budget British horror film. And although I wasn't to see it until almost seven years later, its allure was such that it gripped me like few other films I've seen.

In the Summer of 1993 — almost twenty years on from the simplicities of that childhood Spring (now married with a daughter and mortgaged to the eyeballs!) — I could no longer subdue my desire to commit to paper and share with others the sparkling enthusiasm I had long harboured for the film. One of the initial problems I came up against in the preparation of my tribute was locating and speaking to some of those who were involved in making the film. Several people were to prove most accommodating, notably director José Larraz who despite having been ill spent an inordinate amount of time talking with me, as well as going to the trouble of digging out some of his own tremendous photos. Others, for whatever reason, were not so helpful. Some I was simply unable to track down at all.

I was fairly pleased with the finished job and hoped that others would find it entertaining. Fortunately for me they did. In a short space of time the entire print-run had sold out.

This new expanded pressing has come about because since that first edition appeared I've spoken to two more key people associated with the film, producer Brian Smedley-Aston (who also kindly supplied some of the many new photographic gems within) and lead actress Marianne Morris. Satisfied that I'd accumulated sufficient additional interesting background information to warrant a revised version of that sell-out original, with my enthusiasm firing on all burners the project quickly took priority in 1-Shot's laden schedule.

What you have before you is my personal tribute to *Vampyres*, the souvenir magazine that I myself would have liked to have been able to buy. That its absence from my bookshelf led me to publishing it myself is of little consequence, for I'm hopeful that those who share my passion for the film will feel it's worth adding to theirs. And where I'm optimistic that there's enough new material within to entice the die-hards who already have the original into returning for this edition too, I'm keen that this time out I'll also capture a fresh audience.

I hope that what you have before you now will prove not only to be the definitive tribute to *Vampyres* but also my final word on this appetising morsel of British horror cinema. And whether you know the film intimately, casually or not at all, I trust that you will enjoy this wander through the wanton world of the *Vampyres*.

Tim Greaves (November 1994)



*VAMPYRES* is without doubt the most "naive" film I have ever made. If there was a great deal of sex and loads of blood, it was something unimportant for us during the shooting, probably because we were like a mad family — the actors, technicians, producer and I, all enthusiastic about the work we were doing.

And to us it all seemed normal, although we were vaguely aware of the effect it might have on others.

It was as if we were making a film just for ourselves, purely for us to view. Luckily for the producer, it was viewed by many. The box office receipts proved it!

I'm thankful for the enthusiasm in Tim's booklet about my film. It's very well written. Sometimes with these things the intention is good, but the end result is not so good — *this* piece is smashing!

*Jose*

José Ramon Larraz



Tea up! José Larraz and Anulka take a breather for some welcome refreshment during the location shoot for *VAMPYRES*

I TOOK the plunge with *Vampyres*. From being a successful film editor I suddenly found myself a penniless producer, a nerve-racking experience I wouldn't have changed for anything!

This happened in February 1974. I had just finished editing *Symptoms* for José Larraz. I had a high regard for his talent (an editor can always tell how good a director really is) and loved his style and enthusiasm. We got on well together so rather than wait for "something to crop up" we decided to make our own film.

*Vampyres* was written in five days and pre-production, shooting and post-production took three weeks each. From first fang-gleam of an idea to first answer print at Rank laboratories was twelve weeks. By that time *Symptoms* had surprised us by being selected as the official entry at the Cannes Film Festival, so we were able to have *Vampyres* alongside in the market-place at the same time.

The production was not without problems. During shooting I suddenly became the backer, as well as the producer, and although £42,000 doesn't sound like much for a feature film, it is when you don't have it!

That apart we all had a great time. We'd work late, splash a bit of blood about, have a few drinks, sleep a little, then be back on the Kensington Gore at 7 a.m. next morning.

Since then I have produced a further eight films (the last one, *Deadly Manor*, with José in the U.S.A.) but *Vampyres* remains my favourite.

We made *Vampyres* as a cheap, "let's make money" exploitation movie. Thanks to José it became more than that and, thanks to people like Tim, I'm delighted it's still appreciated.



Brian Smedley-Aston thoughtfully observes the proceedings on the *VAMPYRES* set

Brian Smedley-Aston

# VAMPYRE The Story

Night. In the solitary lit room of a sprawling English manor house two beautiful girls are tenderly making love to one another. The bedroom door creaks open and a shadowy figure enters, immediately opening fire with a handgun. Eight rapid gunshots mix with the screams of Fran and Miriam. When the shooting stops two bloodied nude corpses lie motionless across the four-poster bed.

Fran and Miriam literally, and the viewer vicariously, have entered the world of *Vampyres*.

As a weary traveller checks into a hotel, the manager welcomes him as an old client, but the guest gruffly claims that this is his first visit. Ted, the traveller, heads to his room to settle in as the manager sits bemused, certain that this man has been here before, many years previous.

John and Harriet are heading for a camping holiday in the woods. As they drive along a country road with caravan in tow, the married couple see a dark haired woman, Fran, standing by the road. Harriet, however, spies a second woman, a blonde, Miriam, crouched behind a tree and partially hidden. John's interest is purely casual. Harriet's on the other hand is immediately and stubbornly curious, wondering why the second girl was hidden behind the tree.

Eventually Fran is picked up by a passing car but Miriam remains hidden in the thicket and does not take the ride.

John and Harriet arrive at their campsite, which sits in the shadow of the imposing mansion, and now appears to be abandoned. With her every action it becomes increasingly apparent that this holiday will be haunted by Harriet's obsessive suspicions about this house and the two girls at the roadside, and by John's nonchalant dismissals of his wife's doubts.

That night Harriet sees a lamplight moving through the windows of the house. Later on, whilst dreaming of the two girls stood by the road, a scream awakens her and she shrieks in horror as a pale hand suddenly appears pressed against the window of the caravan. John is woken by her scream but only adds to her confusion by suggesting that she was merely dreaming.

John sets about enjoying his holiday, idyllically passing away the day fishing. Harriet attempts to paint a portrait of the foreboding house. Her worries intensify every time she catches a fleeting early morning glimpse of Fran and Miriam scurrying across the grounds.

As Harriet grows ever more nervous, her concerns are not, it would seem, unfounded. The events at the mansion are even more sinister than she could imagine.

Fran and Miriam have indeed been resurrected as *Vampyres*. Their usual course of evening activity is to attract men to the house by posing as hitchhikers. Having lured their intended victims in, they inebriate



them with a lusty red Carpathian wine. When their guest's defences have been sufficiently lowered, they attack!

Fran prefers to draw blood with a weapon such as a dagger, slicing her victim before sucking blood from the wound, while Miriam opts for the more traditional vampiric method, using her teeth to tear at her prey. Once sated the Vampyres drag the blood-drained body back to the car and carefully create what would appear to be a fatal roadside crash.

Early one evening Ted happens to drive along and Fran hitches a ride. There is an immediate chemistry between the two and it is soon obvious that she will not be able to despatch him as coldly as she has the others.

For his part Ted seems to be aware that something out of the ordinary is afoot. Wittingly or not, he knows that Fran isn't your average hitchhiker. He also senses that someone else is in the house, even though Fran tells him that they are alone. He tells Fran that she reminds him of someone he knew a long time ago. He is full of questions and wants to know more about Fran and the house. Fran allows him to ask all he wants but warns, "There's a limit to the answers."

The night progresses as usual for Fran until after the wine. When Ted is at his most defenceless she does not attack but instead seduces. They make love and fall asleep.

Later that night Ted is roused from his slumber by the clatter of footsteps and the creak of the bedroom door. He finds Fran lying beside him with her eyes fixed in a sightless glassy stare. He staggers to

his feet but can barely reach the door before he has to return weakly to the bed where he collapses back into a deep sleep.

The next morning Ted awakens to find Fran gone and a long deep wound gashed across his left arm. Badly drained of blood, he finds a blood-stained shard of glass from a broken goblet. Believing that he must have had too much to drink and stupidly injured himself, he looks about for Fran. But she is nowhere to be found. He is clearly alone in this strange house, which is devoid of any sign of life; even the clock in the hallway had stopped at a few minutes to five that morning.

Ted goes back to his car and is about to drive away when he notices John and Harriet's caravan. Stopping for some first aid, and noticeably pallid and drawn, Ted accepts the couple's offer to stay for some coffee.

Oddly, he notices that his watch, like the clock in the house, has stopped. Harriet can't suppress her curiosity and asks Ted if anyone actually lives in the house. He can only offer, "That's a question I asked myself earlier... and I still haven't found an answer."

Ted is clearly bewildered but returns to the house to find Fran. John tries to politely distance himself and returns to enjoying his holiday. Harriet's curiosity grows even stronger.

Exhausted, Ted has fallen asleep in his car in front of the mansion. All too quickly night falls and Fran arrives, introducing him to Miriam and Miriam's friend Rupert.

The two men drink too much wine and the couples retire to separate bedrooms. Once again Fran's

feelings for Ted stop her short of killing him. While he sleeps she drinks from his wound but cannot satisfy herself. Tasting the kill, she leaves Ted and joins Miriam in feasting on Rupert. Miriam has mortally wounded the young man, but Fran finally finishes him off by violently stabbing him with her dagger. Glutted from the kill they dispose of him in the usual way.

Returning to the house, the girls shower away the blood. Miriam is upset that Fran has not yet disposed of Ted. Both jealous that her girlfriend should have feelings towards a man, and aware that no good can come from Ted's survival, Miriam pleads with Fran to kill him before it is too late, and they make love.

As morning breaks the Vampyres dash across the grounds of the

mansion and head for the nearby cemetery. They don't realise that Harriet is watching them. Nonetheless, once inside the graveyard they seem to disappear.

Upon waking Ted finds his watch stopped again and discovers a mirror in the bedroom covered up with packing paper. Dazed and a little defeated, he finally decides to return to his hotel. Along the road he stops when he sees an ambulance attending to a crash. Horrified, he recognises the body being removed from the wreckage is Rupert.

He hurries back to the house to tell Fran and Miriam of Rupert's misfortune. Baffled that the house is still deserted, he decides to investigate the cellar, foolishly managing to lock himself in.

Night begins to fall, and Fran and Miriam march through the woods



*Marianne Morris as Vampyre Fran*



Anulka as Vampyre Miriam

on their return to the house. Harriet, under the pretence of painting, but being ever watchful over the house, senses their approach. Seemingly out of nowhere the Vampyres step up beside her.

"I always knew we'd find each other," Fran coldly intones. She traces a jagged figure across Harriet's forehead with her thumb. "By this sign I'll recognise you," she says.

They leave Harriet scared and confused and, returning to the house, they hear Ted's cries from the cellar. They express no remorse upon hearing of Rupert's death. Miriam can only observe, "He didn't look too fit as he left last night...". Fran is equally unmoved: "That's terrible," she says, without

the slightest trace of sincerity.

Again the nightly ritual begins. Fran seduces Ted into another ensanguinated coma but this time she invites Miriam to share from his wound. With Ted unconscious Fran and Miriam make love next to his prone body.

Her attraction to Ted nearly proves to be her undoing, for Fran lays with him till daybreak. Miriam pulls her from the bed and the pair race against the daylight through cellar tunnels to their resting places.

This time their sleep is not peaceful, for Harriet has ignored the 'No Trespassing' sign and has found her way down to their cellar lair. Here, amongst the trappings of dust and fluttering bats, the Vampyres are at rest. Harriet sees them but

does not fully comprehend what is happening. She leaves, but her intrusion does not go unnoticed: Miriam is not asleep and watches her every move.

Harriet's curiosity and confusion have now become complete dread. She tries to tell John what she has seen but he merely admonishes her for sticking her nose in where it doesn't belong.

In their eternal need for blood the Vampyres attract their next victim from the roadside. He is a boorish playboy and is doomed to the inescapable bloody fate of all those before him. But it is in conversation with this fop that we discover that these are not two Vampyres plagued to exist in a sad eternity, preying upon the blood of the living. Rather Fran and Miriam are quite happy with their lot, for as Miriam comments, "Nothing's too good to be true. The only trouble is life's too short." Moments later the playboy is slaughtered.

In the warm safety of their caravan, Harriet manages to temporarily forget her fears and she and John make love. Ted meanwhile is near full stupor now, but has begun to piece things together. He realises he must get away before it's too late. He is near fully drained but manages to dress and heads for the caravan, hoping that John and Harriet can get him to a hospital.

John leaves the caravan to start the car and is viciously attacked by Miriam and Fran, who had been hiding in the back seat. His death is swift but painful.

When John doesn't return to collect Ted, Harriet goes outside to check on him. Swooping quickly upon her, Fran and Miriam

overcome her and drag her off to the cellar.

Harriet wails pitifully as she is forced to kneel and is stripped naked. Rattling through the night, her screams are finally silenced when Fran slits her throat with the dagger.

Ted survives only because the Vampyres must retreat from the rising sun. "We can't let him live," sobs Fran. But it is too late. They flee, pausing momentarily beside a gravestone to catch their breath. Fran looks at Miriam, her expression apologetic and pleading forgiveness for her error of passion.

Ted staggers back to his car and passes out. He wakes to the angry voice of an Estate Agent who is most displeased to find Ted parked on private property. The Agent tosses aside a bottle of wine and accuses Ted of drunkenness. Has this really all been a product of Ted's drunken imagination?

The Estate Agent turns away to two prospective house buyers and explains the strangely affordable selling price of the mansion: "It seems that some years ago the bodies of two young unidentified women were found. A sad story that hasn't helped selling the house. You know how superstitious people are... the murderer always returns to the scene of his crime... that the ghosts of these two women haunt the building. One can't believe in such things nowadays. *Can one?*"

*Synopsis by Kevin Collins*





# VAMPIRES

## The Cast & Crew

Fran ..... Marianne Morris  
 Miriam ..... Anulka  
 Ted ..... Murray Brown  
 John ..... Brian Deacon  
 Harriet ..... Sally Faulkner  
 Rupert ..... Karl Lanchbury  
 Playboy ..... Michael Byrne  
 Hotel Manager ..... Douglas Jones  
 Receptionist ..... Margaret Heald  
 Estate Agent ..... Gerald Case  
 American Lady ..... Bessie Love  
 American Man ..... Elliott Sullivan

Directed by Joseph Larraz

Produced by Brian Smedley-Aston

Screenplay ..... D. Daubenay  
 Asst. Director ..... Paul des Salles  
 Director of Photography .....  
 ..... Harry Waxman, B.S.C.  
 Camera Asst. .... Ken Worringham  
 Art Director ..... Ken Bridgeman  
 Gaffer ..... Geoff Smith  
 Lighting .....  
 .... Southern Lighting (Facilities) Ltd.  
 Film Editor ..... Geoff R. Brown

Music ..... James Clarke  
 Sound .....  
 ..... Trevor Carless and Hugh Strain  
 Sound Editor ..... Clive Smith  
 Production Manager ..... Paul Cowan  
 Production Asst. .... Sean Redmayne  
 Production Secretary .. Joan Williams  
 Make-Up ..... Colin Arthur  
 Wardrobe ..... Dulcie Midwinter  
 Continuity ..... Cheryl Leigh  
 Casting ..... Miriam Brickman

Processed by Rank Laboratories, Denham

Essay Films Ltd.



(Below Right): VAMPIRES down under—this Australian release poster leaves the viewer in little doubt as to what to expect

(Below Left and Opposite): Former models Marianne Morris and Anulka Dziubinska are undeniably appealing to the eye, with or without clothing



# VAMPIRES

## Making the Movie

*Vampyres* was directed by Barcelona-born Spaniard José Ramon Larraz, a former comic-book artist turned photographer/film-maker who has made almost twenty movies in as many years, under a variety of permutations of his name. For *Vampyres* he used Joseph Larraz, but on other occasions he adopted pseudonyms including Jonathon Larraz, J. R. Larrath and Joseph Braunstein (Braunstein being his mother's maiden name).

His beginnings in film were truly remarkable, for as he readily admits he knew practically nothing about the business. His first film, *Whirlpool* (aka *She Died With Her Boots On*, 1969) was shot in England for a Danish producer. It starred the legendary Vivian Neves. They had first met during Larraz' stint as a fashion photographer in Paris. Part of *Whirlpool* was shot at a studio in Barcelona, but the rest utilised Black Park, near Pinewood Studios in Buckinghamshire.

"Imagine my ignorance on my first day," he laughs. "I shot my first shot, and the guy clapped the clapper. I shot my second shot and he clapped the clapper. I shot my third shot and he clapped the clapper, and I said, 'Excuse me, but are you going to annoy me every shot with that thing?', and he looked at me like I'm dim and he said, 'But it's necessary to do that in every shot, otherwise how are you going to put it in order?'. Can you imagine my ignorance? I was so naive."

Humble beginnings, but Larraz claims he owes all his abilities to the technicians with whom he's worked. "That's why I

have so much admiration and love for the technicians," he says. "It was the lighting men and the camera operators who taught me my profession."

Larraz also produced *Whirlpool*, going on to direct many other films including *Deviation* (1971), *Emma*, *Puertos Oscuros* (1973), *Scream And Die* (aka *The House That Vanished*, aka *Psycho Sex*, 1973), which Larraz wanted to call *Fog* but was persuaded otherwise, *Symptoms* (aka *The Blood Virgin*, 1973), *El Minon* (*The Observer*, 1977), *A Family In Mourning* (aka *Mourning*, 1978), *The Chance* (1978), *La Vista Del Vicio* (*Violation Of The Bitch*, 1978), *The Golden Lady* (1979), *Los Ritos Sexuales Des Diablo* (*The Sexual Rites Of The Devil*, aka *Black Candles*, 1980), *Estigma* (*Stigma*, 1981), *Give Us This Day Our Daily Sex* (1981), *Magic Powder* (1981), *La Momia Nacional* (*National Mummy*, aka *The Mummy*, *My Mummy*, 1984), *Goya* (a six-hour TV special, 1986), *Descanse En Piezas* (*Rest In Pieces*, 1987), *Edge Of The Axe* (1988), and *Deadly Manor* (aka *Savage Lust*, 1990).

*Vampyres* was shot over a three week period in the cold of April 1974 on a minuscule budget of just over £40,000. Producer Brian Smedley-Aston recalls, "I'd optimistically done some calculations on the back of an envelope and hoped initially to do it for £25,000. Not realistic. It was about £42,000 I had to find but of course I didn't have it, I borrowed it all. So four or five years later by the time I paid it all back it came to about £75,000. Even then, for that it was a bloody good-looking little picture."

The tight schedule took in location work at Bray, Denham and Harefield. All the interiors were shot in rooms dressed specially for *Vampyres* inside an old empty house, Harefield Grove. The exterior shots of the mansion to which the girls lured their victims were completed at Oakley Court which has been used in many films, notably several of the Hammer horrors.

What was achieved in that short space of time was to become what is arguably one of the greatest — if not the greatest — British horror films of all time. It is

certainly now regarded very highly by many genre critics. Comments Larraz, "I think it is one of the rarer films of the British industry made in such a short time."

The screenplay was written in just five days. Indeed, it was Larraz himself who penned it, adopting as a *nom de plume* his wife's maiden name Diane Daubenay. Perhaps a modest move on his part, but he is abhorrent of the idea of seeing his name up against a list of credits on any film, being a firm believer that making movies is team work and no one person — particularly himself — should receive a surfeit of credit.

With a self-confessed long-time interest in vampires, Larraz was certainly in his element with this film: "It was my dream always, that if I one day made films I wanted to make them in England."

That said, utilising a quiet English

churchyard at Denham proved to be temporarily tricky. Larraz chuckles, "I remember we shot the sequence when they go to the graveyard one morning. I don't know if they explained to the priest who allowed us to shoot there about the *Vampyres*. I think they told him that it was two girls who are running to cry on the grave of their mother, or something. We couldn't have said, 'These two girls will be using your church and they're lesbians and they're back from the dead to suck the blood of their victims'. We'd have had big trouble!"

Larraz's producer on *Vampyres*, Brian Smedley-Aston, had worked in various capacities — mainly editing — on such films as *Tom Jones* (1963), *The Shuttered Room* (1967), *Performance* (1970), *Rollerball* (1975), *Squirm* (1975) and *Blue Sunshine* (1976), to name but a few, and later teamed up again with Larraz for *Deadly*



Resplendent in its Gothic majesty, Oakley Court, oft-used by the Hammer production team, was utilised during the *VAMPYRES* location shoot. The building is now a hotel where, for around £120 a night, one can sample the atmosphere first hand





(Top): Stage blood is applied to Marianne Morris' lips by make-up man Colin Arthur. Observing (left to right) are Harry Waxman, José Larraz and Brian Smedley-Aston

(Bottom): The film's opening murder is staged. José Larraz is hidden behind the camera, as the special effects man (off camera) fires the gun! Harry Waxman is stood immediately to Larraz' left. Between Marianne Morris and Anulka is make-up man Colin Arthur

*Manor* (1990).

Smedley-Aston had edited Larraz's film *Symptoms*, which represented Great Britain at the Cannes Film Festival in 1974. The success of the film prompted him to approach Larraz with an offer, as the director remembers. "Brian told me, 'If you want to do something similar to *Symptoms*, but more horrific, I'll go and find some money and produce it for you'. He was quite keen.

"When I wrote the script I said, 'Brian, listen, I'd prefer to do something that I love myself, but don't start getting fantastic ideas. Because if we do what I have in my mind I think we can make it with very little money'. He wanted to do something more important, but I discouraged him, I said 'No'. I preferred to do something modest than to try something more grand, because I knew the limitations and I know that the number one thing in films is to get money."

*Vampires* subsequently became more crucial a project for Smedley-Aston than for anyone else involved, and the pressure was on to get the film completed as quickly as possible. As Larraz recalls, "Brian was very nervous because he put his house in danger to get the money. He would tell me, 'Please José, do that today, and do that today'. He was quite worried."

Smedley-Aston remembers only too well the hitches that hit the production. "I was promised some funds by a friend in the City," he says. "Having liked José particularly, I admired his work on *Symptoms*, I thought this might be the opportunity to call on that promise. So I told [my friend] and he said 'Fine'. And we rather rashly got into production. It took about three weeks to prepare and three weeks to shoot. At the end of the first week of shooting when I said, 'Hey, how about some money, I've got a crew to pay', he said 'Sorry, can't manage it. Times are bad, I thought I could but I can't'."

One week into a three week shoot, and obliged to pay the full union crew two weeks notice, Smedley-Aston realised it

would have cost as much to shut down as to finish. So production pressed on regardless. Two of the cars used during filming (Ted's BMW and the Playboy's Matra Simca) belonged to Smedley-Aston himself, so imperative was it to keep costs to a minimum.

"Every penny that went out came through my hands," he stresses. "I used to go and pick José up. He was staying nearby at a small hotel and we used to meet and talk for twenty minutes before I took him to the set every day and the same thing at night. So I was really on top of everything. Up to the first day of shooting I had actually laid out only £128 in cash, which must be something of a record for a good-looking 35mm film."

Former model Marianne Morris, says she was both surprised and thrilled to have culled the lead as Fran, but she was also conscious that these financial snares could have shattered her first opportunity at tackling a film role. "I had that feeling when we first started it," she recalls. "Obviously in a very small, tightly-knit group there aren't any secrets. And when money is tight, with the producer and the director you can see the signs.

"But in a way I'd nothing to lose," she muses. "I'd never even made a film before, it wasn't as though I was half way up the ladder, that would have made a big difference. I'd done comedy shows for television where I'd done a few days here and a few days there but I'd never worked with such intensity, it was virtually six days a week — I think I remember putting in a Sunday as well."

Sometimes the need to keep things moving along at a gallop, coupled with the tight schedule that the small budget dictated, made for a less than ideal situation. But such is the way with a low-budget movie.

Marianne Morris for one never allowed production problems to mar the experience for her. "It was jolly good fun. José Larraz was quite a character. It was hard work. I suppose for an inexperienced actress it was even harder work, but it was very enjoyable."



Brian Deacon, who portrayed John — and who Larraz describes as “Fantastic, a very good actor” — remembers the shoot well. “We were in this one location. It was a skeleton crew. A real lick around with a wet sponge job. There was no location catering — we had to go down the pub for lunch. They’d say, ‘You get something and we’ll pay for it.’”

Sally Faulkner, his wife Harriet in the film, adds, “Somebody, I can’t remember who, had a large dog — a Great Dane I think — that they used to bring along, and so the room in which we changed and got made up in the Gothic mansion resembled a jolly hippy commune. A nice contrast to the horror of the film.”

Occasionally working late into the night took its toll on people’s patience. Says Deacon, “I remember one night that we were there at ten o’clock and in the end I said, ‘I’m going home, this is stupid’. We’d been there since seven in the morning and there were no proper breaks, so I remember getting up and having a row and leaving.”

“We did work long hours and probably bent the overtime rules a little,” admits Smedley-Aston. “But everyone was very supportive.”

One of the first sequences in the can was the travelling shot of the Vampyre girls lurking behind a tree at the roadside, as seen from John and Harriet’s car. It remains one of Larraz’s favourite shots in the film.

Almost everything that was put on paper made it onto the screen. With the exception of a short sequence Larraz recalls having written into the story which was to follow the shots of the first motorist’s body being lifted into an ambulance. Later that night the girls were to visit the morgue and perform a ritual, some sort of black mass, in which they would extract more blood from the dead man’s body. Although it was clearly not essential to the advancement of the plot, according to Larraz it was for budgetary, not creative reasons that the scene was dropped.

It wouldn’t be unreasonable to have



Preparing another shot inside the mansion. Far left is sound technician Trevor Carless, and Harry Waxman (in check shirt) looks on as José Larraz discusses the scene with the special effects man

assumed that being a comic-book artist, Larraz would have storyboarded the film in pre-production. Not so. In fact he claims to have never worked from storyboards on any of his films, and with good reason. “Being a comic-book designer, when you get a pencil in your hand you become very fantasist. I drew covers for paperbacks too and if it’s the story of an Apache Indian you put in twenty or forty of them.

“So I always thought I wouldn’t do storyboards because I’d sit at my table and do something that I can’t do on the screen. I prefer to have my storyboard in my brain.”

This method of trying to visualise as he went along caused argument between Larraz and the Director of Photography, the late Harry Waxman, during the early part of the *Vampyres* shoot, as Brian Smedley-Aston recounts. “Everyone was working on a lot of adrenaline and very long hours, and José is fairly excitable, a wonderful chap but very excitable. And I’m a rather phlegmatic Englishman. He had an argument with Harry Waxman and stormed off the set and said, ‘I take my airplane.’ We were shooting at Harefield. So I said ‘Yes, José, Denham or Heathrow?’” He smiles. “Anyway, I walked three times round the house with him and nursed him back onto the set.”

From disagreement eventually came mutual respect as Larraz is keen to emphasise. “[Harry] would say, ‘Why are you looking at everything all the time, don’t you trust me, or what?’” he chuckles, his work with Waxman clearly eliciting very fond memories. “I loved this man, and he loved me. We became such close friends and it was a pleasure every morning when we went to shoot to think, ‘I’m going to meet Harry’, and he’d be thinking, ‘I’m going to meet José, let’s see what work we can do together’.

“We enjoyed it so much. He was much older than I and took care of me. I remember I had a hernia by this time, and because sometimes I operated the camera myself, by hand, in very uncomfortable positions, he’d say, ‘Don’t do such stupid things, it’s bad for your

hernia’, and I’d tell him, ‘Piss off, Harry!’” He laughs.

Yet at the end of the day Larraz’s creativity with the camera speaks for itself in the many sumptuous visionary coups that decorate *Vampyres*. Take for example the most sublime shot in the film. It occurs near the climax as the two Vampyre girls recede into the woods, an eddy of leaves swirling up in their wake. Larraz recalls this particular shot with amusement. “That was shot just before lunchtime. I was laying down on the grass in the leaves. I remember that one technician — a nice guy, I think it was the camera operator, but I don’t remember his name — said to me, ‘That is what you’re going to eat today?’”

The casting in *Vampyres* — even if only from a visual standpoint — is arguably almost faultless. Larraz collaborated with the late Miriam Brickman, a casting director who was greatly respected within the industry: “I worked with Miriam for two or three years and we were extremely close friends, really like relatives. So the relationship between Miriam and I was very close and she helped me cast the film.”

Prior to the acquisition of delicious Marianne Morris and Anulka Dziubinska for their film, Larraz and Smedley-Aston had signed another actress. There’s a story that claims the girl pulled out when her mother objected to the lesbian emphasis in the story. There’s some doubt as to the authenticity of the motivations behind her withdrawal from the project, but another girl was certainly in the running as Brian Smedley-Aston confirms. “When we were looking around before we got Marianne and Anulka there was somebody who was a very good actress who was interested. She was doing pub theatre and that sort of stuff. We actually offered her the job and she got cold feet.

“Whether it was her mother or the director of the show she was doing I’m not sure.” He laughs, “We were delighted actually because in José’s own inimitable words, ‘She looked like a gargoyle, I’m glad we didn’t have her.’



Explaining the next scene to your leading ladies is a serious business... then again a director can always find time between takes for a few moments of relaxation! José Larraz, Marianne Morris and Anulka out on location

Jointly we made the correct decision to go with beauty over Thespian ability."

Marianne Morris too remembers this incident: "I think she got the collywobbles." She adds, "You couldn't read [the explicitness] into the script. It was a horror story basically and it had sexual overtones and of course the selling feature was that it happened to be lesbians rather than nymphomaniacs."

"Our lead girls, sweet as they were, were fairly inexperienced from an acting point of view," says Sally Faulkner. "But they were very nice girls."

José Larraz is also very complimentary of his female leads, despite the fact that they were clearly hired more for their effortless ability to look great in front of a camera than their talents in the acting stakes.

"Marianne Morris is very sensual," he says. "I was closer to Marianne, but for one reason: she spoke French. And French is my second language because I lived for fifteen years in Paris. So sometimes I communicated with her in French."

Marianne clearly remembers her director with fondness. "He's got a very Continental sense of humour which we shared, and I think he was tremendously visually perceptive and he had a wonderful imagination. With *Vampyres* it was almost like a fantasy that he actually put on the screen."

Larraz forged firm friendships with both his leading ladies during that April of 1974. "While we were shooting Marianne and I were at a small inn close to the location," he says. "Anulka lived with her boyfriend so she went home every day to London, even though it was an hour by car. But Marianne and I had dinner together every night, so when we commenced filming we were closer together, if you know what I mean. But that doesn't mean I preferred one girl to the other. My relationship with both was splendid."

It would seem then, certainly in the case of the leading ladies, that their looks were the prime reason that they were cast. "Exactly," says Larraz, "That was

the only reason."

In view of that, and despite the fact that both girls give credible performances, it isn't perhaps surprising to learn that they had their lines dubbed. Says Larraz, "They were the only ones dubbed. I remember when we shot some scenes and they spoke it was terribly disappointing. My God! In many of those scenes I put my fingers in my ears so I couldn't hear them."

Producer Smedley-Aston agrees. "They were both extremely nice," he says. "They'd never done anything before. They had both worked as models so they were fairly camera confident, there not being much difference between a movie camera and a still camera... until of course they had lines."

Marianne Morris was dubbed by Annie Ross who did a lot of re-voicing at the time. Although she was slightly disappointed she appreciated the reasons. "It's all to do with funding and timing," she says. "I think a lot of actors and actresses dub their voice afterwards anyway, because it's difficult to co-ordinate the actions and the speech, but when they're in the actual dubbing centre they get through it a lot quicker. I can understand really. I might have taken a week where somebody else experienced might have taken perhaps 48 hours. It was done with myself and Anulka. It was a decision made because we weren't 'actresses'."

For Brian Smedley-Aston the need for dubbing was of minor consequence in view of the contribution he feels both girls gave the film. "The bottom line is that I think they both came out remarkably well," he says with conviction. "José coaxed good performances from them and I think they'd be the first to admit they weren't the most experienced or brilliant of actresses. But I think they had a certain *joie de vivre* and really entered into the parts and I think that's more important than any technical RADA-type training."

Larraz remembers working closely with the girls to draw the very best out of them. "How can I put this?" He



pauses. "It wasn't *difficult*, but sometimes I found it slightly *awkward* to get a good performance from these girls. Neither Anulka or Marianne had made films and it's difficult to give the weight of a story over to people who've never made films. I love to direct actors and I tried to explain every shot. I told them, 'Look at my face. You are beautiful, I am not, but try to do what you see in my face. My expression will teach you more than a thousand words'.

"So I tried to explain everything, how to use their hands in the sexual scenes, how to move. Particularly Marianne, because Anulka was very gifted. Marianne was a little bit rough in her moves so I told her, 'Please don't take the man like this'. And particularly in the lesbian scene, 'Be more careful with your girlfriend', he begins to chuckle, "Don't take her like you're tackling a steak or roast chicken', you know?"

On her intimate scenes in the film with

Anulka, a quote attributed to Marianne appeared in the pages of "Mayfair" magazine defensively stating "I am not in the least bit lesbian", and adding that she consumed a bottle of Scotch before shooting and passed out afterwards. Were it a genuine quote it's feasible that it could have been a case of retrospective regret over some of the rather explicit moments captured on film. But director Larraz, who had come to know Marianne quite well, remembers it differently: "I don't recall she drank more than a glass of milk," he says rather doubtfully. "We didn't have the money for whisky. Maybe she drank Coca-Cola, it was cheaper."

Marianne herself has the final word on the matter: "I can't remember anything about it, I can't even say I read the piece. But magazines like "Mayfair" put things in a way that makes for better reading." She laughs, "I don't think you could work if you were that drunk!"



Marianne Morris, Brian Deacon, Anulka

Both of the female leads clearly had no qualms about disrobing for the film, as can be witnessed at regular intervals throughout. During one sequence in which the girls share a shower the hand-held camera loiters secretively behind a lattice screen, moving furtively to peek from behind house plants as the girls make love. It turns the viewing experience into something even more guiltily arousing and perverse.

Marianne Morris dispels that voyeuristic thrill somewhat when she speaks of the heady aura of eroticism that pervades the film. "[The sex] was very much simulated, and you've got the technicians and so much happening around you. And you're concentrating so much, you know, move your arm *there* or whatever. The technicalities of it overcome the sexuality of it. It's like patting your head and rubbing your stomach, you've got to concentrate. So it's not quite the same." She laughs, "Especially with twenty crew people around you and José Larraz swearing when you haven't got it quite right! And Brian being totally polite and a diplomat in contrast."

According to the director everything ran fairly smoothly during the shoot with little in the way of wasted film. However, he does recall one moment that caused considerable hilarity on the set. "I'm going to tell you something that not many people know," he says, his thick Spanish accent wreathed with joviality. "Well, the crew, yes, but not many others."

The moment occurred during the sequence in which Miriam wakes Fran in a panic as the sun begins to rise and they make off to the cellar. "Trevor Carless was the technician for the sound. The scene in the corridor was the first shot we did one day after lunch. I think it was Anulka running with the other following her. And the other girl touched her on the shoulder and said, 'Hey, you farted'. And the sound technician started laughing and I said, 'What happened?' and he said, 'Well you don't realise what happened, but I do', and so everyone



listened to the fart of Anulka. She was terribly embarrassed."

According to Larraz, he has never worked on any other film where everyone proved so co-operative. Yet occasionally the actors found themselves being asked to shoot scenes that weren't in the original script.

Such a scene was the brief sexual interlude between John and Harriet. Brian Deacon, who felt that Larraz could be rather a manipulative director, recalls: "That was never part of the movie. That was something [Larraz] cajoled us into doing, and for a quiet life you say, 'Well alright, we'll do *this* much', and it's very easy to forget that there's this camera and it's there forever."

Sally Faulkner, who'd had a baby only a matter of weeks before shooting commenced, remembers this scene more with amusement than anything. "Brian and I did feel a bit manipulated at times. But my main memory was being so tired all the way through because I'd just had my daughter and I was feeding her at the time. I remember seeing the film and thinking I looked about 90! Anyway, because we were filming I kept on missing feeds." She begins to laugh, adding, "I'd get into bed with poor old Brian and I'd spurt milk all over him!"

More seriously, she continues, "[Vampyres] was for me something I enjoyed more in retrospect than at the time. I didn't feel José and I got on

(Top): Like wild animals the Vampyres seem to prefer the unrefined tang of raw flesh to a chargrilled steak!



Brian Deacon braves it under the knife filming the grisly climax of *VAMPYRES*

particularly well and I wasn't resilient enough to cope with it at the time."

The rather violent murder sequences in *Vampyres*, among the most vicious ever committed to film, caused minor panic with some of the victims-to-be in the cast, and understandably so, for one of the sacrificial blades was real. Sally Faulkner had a scare when the time came for her character to die: "I was terrified when [Marianne] had to cut my throat. She was coming towards me and they said, 'Have you got the dummy knife?', and she hadn't, she'd got the *real* knife. So that was a close escape."

Despite any qualms that Faulkner may have had, the sequence is another memorable one for the director. "I think that was the last shot of the afternoon, and I shot that with the hand-held camera myself," he says.

"I remember the death scene they had for me," says Brian Deacon. "I was a bit

frightened because Marianne Morris was to come from the back seat. They gave her this knife and told her what to do and I said, 'Give me that knife a minute', and had a feel of it, and it wasn't exactly blunt! I said, 'You do know how to do this, don't you? No-one's going to see the difference if you're half an inch away from me'. And of course the first take she really drew the thing across my throat and that freaked me out a bit."

He continues, "They had a stirrup pump full of Kensington Gore. And they put a plastic tube up the back of my shirt and sellotaped it against my neck, so that when this knife got drawn across they hit the stirrup pump outside the car, and you got this *ffsshoom!*"

"They had two cameras for that. I think it was the only time they shot with two. One was framed up on the window and then there was a hand-held camera which I think José Larraz himself was

operating outside, moving it around wherever he felt like it. So he said, 'You get your throat cut, and all the blood goes, and the two girls dive on you and they lick the blood', and all that. So I said, 'Okay', and he said 'Take your time about dying', and I said, 'Yeah, alright.' He smiles. "So I thought I'd done a pretty good death sequence and finally came to a halt somewhere around the gearstick, and I suddenly hear from outside the car — the camera's still rolling — José Larraz shouting, 'Die some more, die some more!'. So from having been dead I kind of revived myself and went through the whole process again."

Of the general level of violence in *Vampyres* Larraz is very defensive. "I was always interested in vampires, ever since I first read Bram Stoker. But I always thought that I don't believe in that kind of romantic vampire, with the girl falling into his arms and him sucking her blood. Mainly because the Romanian Vlad Tepes, on whom Dracula was based, was so brutal — the impaler! So the vampire is a criminal, not a romantic person, and when I put these two girls in those parts I imagined them like two panthers, two wild animals."

"And why always suck blood from the neck? I imagine my vampires turn almost to cannibalism, to eat somebody, to take the blood from anywhere, no matter if it is on the arm or on the balls! Anywhere! I can't imagine someone coming to suck my blood gently, it would be....," he snarls, "Very quick, with urgency. Which I put quite a lot of in my film. Urgency because the sun rises. Urgency for the kill. Urgency for the blood, because it's what they need. And that is why my film is so brutal."

The stage blood too caused slight concern in view of the fact that the girls had to be seen voraciously lapping the stuff up. But it was quickly established with the make-up department that it wasn't going to do them any harm and they proceeded to consume it with relish, as the finished film testifies. One particularly emotive sequence, which

finds Fran gently licking the blood from a nasty wound on Ted's arm, is horribly repellent, yet curiously erotic at the same time. "In my opinion the blood-thirstiness was a bit over the top," says Marianne Morris, "but I suppose that's what makes it different to other films."

"I remember one day we went with the censor — a very nice old gentleman — to see the film," recalls Larraz. "And Brian [Smedley-Aston] tried to work on him a little bit, saying, 'Don't cut this, don't cut that, you can cut that', but [the censor] was quite indulgent considering the times."

Indeed he was. One of the last sequences shot was the death of Rupert, which even in its trimmed form is still one of the film's most memorably nasty scenes.

With the film in the can, post production got underway. But in the case of *Vampyres* Brian Deacon remembers that this was well in hand before the shoot was completed. "I think José was editing it through the night," he says. "Whatever material he got back from the labs he was sitting down to edit."

Enthusiasm appears to have been the key to the success of *Vampyres*. Not just that of Larraz himself, but of everyone involved. Again the director has nothing but praise for all who worked on the film, and none more so than the film's composer James Clarke.

"A very important part in the film was the composing, the music. We lunched with James Clarke in a pizzeria in Soho one day when the film was finished. And after lunch we went to see the film in movieola. He understood the story absolutely immediately. I've worked with important composers in Italy and Spain, but nobody understood any story so accurately and so fast as him. I have fantastic admiration for him because I think the music very much helped the story."

Aside from the excellent title theme, some of the most outstanding and memorable examples of Clarke's work on *Vampyres* can be found when the





(Top): Murray Brown shares a joke with Brian Smedley-Aston between takes

(Bottom): José Larraz discusses the next scene with Trevor Carless

visual menace is underscored not by music, rather by a low synthetic moaning sound akin to wind in a tunnel. It simply but effectively adds a brooding and claustrophobic edge to the building tension. "The noise, that wailing noise, was imitated in many films after *Vampyres*," says Larraz. "Many films. And that was the creativity, the invention of Mr. James Clarke. He was a good composer."

A brief alliance later formed between Clarke, Brian Smedley-Aston and one of the great British sex stars of the Seventies, Fiona Richmond. They made three films together with Clarke directing, Smedley-Aston producing and Richmond starring.

The first was *Exposé* (aka *Trauma*, aka *The House On Straw Hill*, 1975, now banned in the U.K. on video), co-starring Linda Hayden, and which Clarke also scripted. Several members of the *Vampyres* production team worked on *Exposé*, including Paul des Salles, Hugh Strain, Paul Cowan and Cheryl Leigh. Miriam Brickman handled the casting, which landed Karl Howman a brief, but crucial role; long before his British TV renown, here he was cast as a nasty thug clad, more than coincidentally, in a T-Shirt emblazoned "I Am A Vampyre!"

The trio went on to work together on *Let's Get Laid* (aka *Fiona*, 1977) and *Hardcore* (1977). Clarke also directed, among others, *Colorado Stone* (aka *Sweet Virgin*, 1973), *Paul Raymond's Erotica* (1980), *Funny Money* (1982), and *Going Undercover* (aka *Yellow Pages*, 1983).

For all the evidence of his many happy memories of the film, Larraz does seem vaguely disinterested in *Vampyres*, admitting, "I've seen the film maybe three times only." Yet this would appear to apply to most of his work. "When I finish a film my interest for that film is also over. I prefer not even to see the film."

But is he not interested in what the critics have to say? "I think the critics can teach you many things. Some are very cruel. But I read the criticism and if it's pleasant I am happy and if it's



unpleasant I think that's a pity, naturally. But I respect them. Normally critics don't like small films like this. But "Variety" for example carried a very good criticism of the film."

One of the first countries in which *Vampyres* opened was Australia where, according to Larraz, it was a huge success. With its garish advertising campaign, it's little wonder. "The film was really a big success. It made a lot of money. But not for me. Not for the producer." He laughs adding, as if his integrity could be doubted for one moment, "It's true!"

Brian Deacon too recalls: "I was in Australia not long after, working for the BBC, and it was at a drive-in. The people I was working with kept saying, 'Come on, let's go and see that movie', and I said, 'No, I can't be bothered'."

After trying fruitlessly to peddle the film around to smaller distributors in Britain a deal was eventually struck with Rank. "I had a salesman whose name was Irving Shapiro," says Smedley-Aston. "He was one of the best-known film salesmen, I was very fortunate to find him. I met him at the Cannes Film Festival the year that we shot the picture. Irving liked it and agreed to take it. He'd been in the business for forty or fifty years, he was an old man, but he had a good nose. He knew what the film was

(Top): Harriet (Sally Faulkner), stripped and slain by the Vampyres



*Racing against the sun!*

worth. No-one in England would take it. We were trying places like Target, the little people, and he wanted to go somewhere like Rank. And it took him about a year to convince them to take it."

Not their usual fare, Rank clearly weren't sure what to do with the film but, the Seventies being the days of the double-bill, almost two years after it had been made *Vampyres* was punted out to British audiences in the Summer of 1976 as second feature to *The Devil's Rain*.

The publicity campaign surrounding the release of *Vampyres* was not surprisingly commensurate with its status as a low budget horror film: practically non-existent. And over the years it's received mixed reviews. One critic called it "chaotic, badly acted and sleazy", another praised it for delivering "tons of mood, imagery, intrigue and stimulation". It's been called everything from "a terrific, remarkably erotic film" to "gruesome nonsense". But at the time

of its original release in Britain the critique unquestionably leant towards the favourable and in the majority of references to it now the film is hailed as something of a classic.

In the years since its release inaccuracies have surfaced in reviews of *Vampyres* that have given rise to misleading information. For example, perusing the review in "Monthly Film Bulletin" (June 1976) not only does it state that the graphic sex and violence was being left intact for the British release, but that the film had been granted a AA certificate (the equivalent of today's 15). In actual fact the film was awarded an X certificate and shorn of almost three minutes of footage (see *Vampyres: The Cuts*).

The extensive and respected "Aurum Encyclopedia of Horror" too is notably erroneous in its claim that the film was shot in 'scope. Says Larraz, "No, no, no. It was 1.74 I think. We hadn't the money

for such luxury." And as the finished film proved, it was a luxury that wasn't required anyway.

It's fitting that in 1994, the year that marked its 20th anniversary, the film has received two festival screenings, one at no less prestigious a venue than the National Film Theatre on London's South Bank. Brian Smedley-Aston now holds the theatrical rights to the film and in fact it was his own 35mm print that was presented to enthusiastic audiences at these events.

The video rights currently remain with Rank, yet the producer is clearly disappointed that the film remains unseen by a television audience in Britain. "It's never been sold to television in this country," he laments. "And I'm still trying to sell it. I've seen stuff that's raunchier and certainly far worse-made on late night TV here. But it's never been seen on domestic TV in the U.K." He continues, "I'm trying to sell it to Sky at the moment, they're interested but they say 'Yes, fine, but our budget is a little tight this year', or 'We're trying to stay away from horror', you know, this, that and the other." He adds, optimistically, "It'll happen sometime."

#### COMMENT

*Vampyres* is one of my favourite horror films; this booklet is testimony to that. From its distinctive opening titles as bats flap wildly at the camera out of the blackness to the closing scene, which casts a shadow of uncertainty over everything the audience has witnessed, it is a soul-penetrating tale. Indeed, for this film my munificence with utterances of praise is boundless. There are many moments throughout that are quite simply exhilarating, and could be discussed at considerable length. There being insufficient space within these pages, there are just one or two points I consider worth raising pertaining to specific moments within the film.

Those who dislike *Vampyres* often as not level their criticism at the pace of the story, or various elements within it. In

one instance, perhaps, it's difficult to deny that this holds water, namely the lethargic stretch when Ted roams the empty mansion in search of Fran, which is interminable.

However, it has also been said that the scenes with Brian Deacon and Sally Faulkner diffuse the film's impact, breaking the build-up in tension. In fact their characters are an integral part of the escalating and ultimately almost overwhelming sense of unease that pervades every frame. Harriet becomes a study in obsession, starkly contrasted by John's stubborn refusal to heed the danger signs. Harriet's death is a literal realisation of the expression that curiosity kills the cat. Indeed, she dies as a result of her inquisitive nature, he because of his lack of one.

The viewer has decided early on that the pair will probably wind up the hero and heroine of the piece but, in having them murdered just minutes from the closing credits, Larraz slyly kicks out the crutch of "happy ending" conformity from beneath the expectations of his audience.

One moment in the film, steeped in an undercurrent of menace, yet also slightly baffling, comes during a scene at dusk as Harriet stands by her easel in the grounds of the mansion. The Vampyre girls step almost silently from the woodland behind her and Fran reaches up and touches Harriet's head, saying, "I always knew we'd find each other. By this sign I'll recognise you."

Sally Faulkner admits to being mystified over the possible meaning of the scene. "No idea." She bursts out laughing. "All I can remember is I couldn't find my bloody coat!"

José Larraz explains the quasi-religious symbolism thus: "It was maybe a little bit of blasphemy, but Jesus Christ when he saw somebody would very often put his finger on the forehead, like Mary Magdalene, like he was saying, 'Now you are mine', and that gave me the idea, like 'Now you are mine and you can't escape'. But I didn't do it in the sense of blasphemy because although



I'm not exactly a believer I don't like to do things against any kind of religion, because I don't like to hurt people."

Whatever the motivation behind it, the moment emphasises the sinister aura that descends upon the tranquillity of the woodland backdrop with the appearance of the Vampyre girls. Harriet has, quite literally, been marked for death.

Another rather baffling scene is one that doesn't even exist! In one of the most commonly printed stills from the film, the Vampyres are seen *inside* John and Harriet's caravan, Miriam in a state of panic, Fran pressed mournfully against the glass. I had always assumed that this was a short sequence that must have been shot, and then considered superfluous, being removed at the editing stage. What we see suggests that Fran and Miriam, having killed Harriet,

return to the caravan to finish off Ted, but are too late, as through the window they see him staggering back to his car. So was this the case? Not so, it would appear, for in spite of any evidence that might indicate otherwise, director Larraz remembers it only as a publicity shot.

Marianne Morris recalls the photo in question. "It was used in a lot of publicity, it's very dramatic," she says. Inadvertently fuelling the enigma, she adds, "Truthfully I can't quite remember, there was so much that was similar that was shot. But I've a feeling it was something that might have been left on the cutting room floor." It seems as if we may never know for certain.

There have been various theories concerning the identity of the unseen assailant at the opening of the film, but all the indicators point to Murray



"The blood-thirstiness was a bit over the top," says Marianne Morris, "but I suppose that's what makes *VAMPYRES* different from other films."



In the blink of an eye Miriam's bloodlust changes her from provocative plaything to raging psychopath

Brown's character, Ted. The manager at the hotel where he checks in appears to recognise him from many years previous, Ted comments to Fran that she reminds him of someone he used to know, and in the film's finale we hear the Estate Agent talking about the myth that a killer always returns to the scene of his crime.

Larraz outlines his interpretation of what is after all his own story: "The girls never existed as Vampyres. At the start Murray Brown kills them for some passionate reason. Who knows, maybe because he was in love with one of them and he found them to be lesbians and he shot them. The rest is the nightmare that he has in his car. Maybe he returned to the scene of his crime and he got drunk and he had the nightmare that they became Vampyres, and then he's woken up by the Estate Agent.

"The main part of the story *could* be real, but you can believe what you prefer."

So if those Vampyres *were* real, then they didn't die and they're still out there, roaming the English countryside, preying on unsuspecting motorists. Larraz states quite firmly that there was

never a thought given to the possibility of a sequel, but his enthusiasm for the subject matter still burns brightly today.

"I have a script now, it's about vampires. I would like to shoot it, but I don't have any connections in England and in Spain they are not keen on these films. It's a little bit connected with AIDS, because these are very sophisticated vampires and when they go to suck the vein of one of their victims they have a pathologist first make an analysis of the blood to see if the victim has AIDS or not!"

Perhaps we may one day yet see the return of José Larraz and his luscious Vampyre girls.

Anyone who has yet to experience *Vampyres* for themselves has an irresistible and rarely matched treat in movie entertainment awaiting them. Just to confuse the issue, it has been located living out life around the world under a number of different titles, among them *Vampyres: Daughters Of Dracula* and simply *Daughters Of Dracula*, *Vampyres: Daughters Of Darkness*, *Blood Hunger*, *The Vampyre Orgy* and *Satan's Daughters*. Though not surprised, this is news to Larraz. "Well, my title was *Vampyres*", he says adamantly.

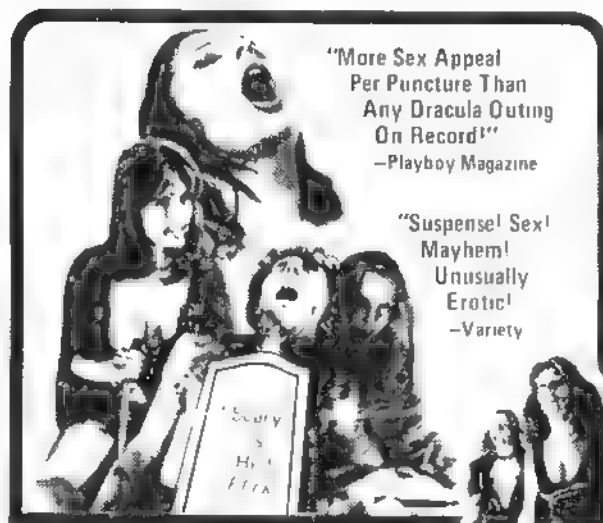
"The whole point was to get people in to see it," Brian Smedley-Aston points out. "What they did, they opened it as *Vampyres* and it didn't perform very well. So they pulled it out and launched it again a few months later as if it were a totally new film, under the *Daughters Of Dracula* title, and it did a lot better."

He adds, "What I did like on the American poster was the way they sold it. They had *Daughters Of Dracula* in big letters at the bottom but the most obvious thing in bright red letters at the top was 'They Suck!'"

Whatever title it goes by, the film is essential viewing for any serious aficionado of screen terror. It may be

Continued on Page 36...

(Left): *Daughters Of Dracula*, one of several titles under which *VAMPYRES* has been released worldwide



REFRESHINGLY ORIGINAL! SIR!

# VAMPYRES Daughters of Dracula











...Continued from Page 30

twenty years old now, but it remains one of the most haunting and atmospheric pieces ever committed to celluloid. Producer Smedley-Aston readily admits it's one of the most enjoyable films he's worked on in his diverse and busy career. Embroidered with lush visuals that boldly defy its meagre budget, there is little doubt in my mind that it will never be surpassed, certainly not by any British-made film.

### THE CAST

Overlooking the uncredited extras who appear during the sequences in which ambulance men and police officers attend the sites of apparent crash victims, the impeccable *Vampyres* cast comprises just twelve people, the bulk of the plot revolving around the activities of only five of them.

MARIANNE MORRIS leads as Fran, one of the two Vampyre girls, oozing sex appeal and becoming the focal point of every scene in which she appears. Her other films include *The Love Box* (aka *Love Camp*, aka *The Sex Box*, 1972), *The Over Amorous Artist* (1974), and in *Percy's Progress* (aka *It's Not The Size That Counts*, 1974) she cameoed as Miss Buxton, one of the contestants in a beauty pageant. Around this same period Belgian-born

Marianne also appeared in several commercials on British TV, including one for Brutus jeans. She also worked alongside such television luminaries as Ken Dodd, Benny Hill, Mike Yarwood, Stanley Baxter, Reg Varney and *The Two Ronnies*, though as she admits herself the work was strictly decorative, "More in a model capacity than as an actress."

In October 1976 she appeared in "Mayfair" (Vol. 10 No. 11) in a 5-page nude spread, cover-credited as "the girl from Vampyres".

Marianne left the acting profession in the mid-1970's and now manages a small business in bathroom refurbishment. "If you thought *Vampyres* was erotic or explicit," she says, "the work I was offered subsequently was absolutely... well there's no other word for it, it was pornographic. *Vampyres* was fun and to me it wasn't that explicit. I just felt after that it was a downward spiral. It can be quite soul-destroying, you're selling a product which is yourself and if that isn't successful you can't help but take it personally. So if you're going to be an actress you've got to take it seriously and be prepared to go through the stages when you're not that busy. And I just wasn't financially in that kind of position. So I thought it was better just to

Both Marianne (left) and Anulka (top) posed nude for popular men's magazines during the early Seventies



One very nasty looking love bite!



"...And you rush to the window — my God, it's daylight!..."





break loose and do something else."

So how does Marianne feel about *Vampires* looking back from twenty years on as business woman and married mother of three? Does she perhaps regret making the film? "Not really," she says. "It's all part of life's rich pattern. At the time I'd had one child, I think she was about 3 and now she's 23-years-old. And I've got a son of 12 and a daughter of 15. Of course with the 15-year-old, quite a lot of her school friends have seen it and it's slightly embarrassing," she laughs, "'Oh, mum, why don't you put the make-up on, look like you did in the film!'" She continues, more seriously, "It's a little bit embarrassing because I'm in business now, I don't make it common knowledge. But as far as regretting it, no not at all."

**ANULKA DZIUBINSKA** co-stars as Fran's lover Miriam; she too is a Vampyre. A petite and pretty blonde from Preston in Lancashire, she worked in a variety of jobs including modelling, jewellery making and briefly as a dental nurse. She travelled the world and spent time in Munich where she was first photographed by "Playboy" for their August 1972 Girls of Munich spread. She went on to become their May 1973 playmate in a 4-page spread and

centrefold pin-up.

Her other work includes Ken Russell's *Lisztomania* (1975) and the feature film based on the hit TV series *The Likely Lads* (1976) in which she played Dawn, the promiscuous daughter of Bob and Terry's landlady. After appearing on the *Vampires* titles simply as Anulka, her surname on other credits became the more pronunciation-friendly Dubinska. Although credited in Dave Rogers' "The Complete Avengers" book with an appearance in *The New Avengers: Gnaws* (1976) on television, there is no apparent trace of her in the episode.

Where Anulka is now isn't certain, it's believed that she's based in the States. "I don't know what happened to her," says Brian Smedley-Aston wistfully. "A lot of people have asked me about that."

**MURRAY BROWN** plays Ted, the victim with whom Fran becomes involved, and the one who almost proves to be her downfall. *Vampires* wasn't Murray's first encounter with the undead. In Dan Curtis' *Dracula* (1973) he portrayed Jonathan Harker alongside an impressive cast that included Jack Palance, Nigel Davenport, Simon Ward and Fiona Lewis. Murray's other film work includes *The Deadly Affair* (1966), *The Black Windmill* (1974), *Eye* (1976), and *Hardcore* (1977) for *Vampires* composer turned director James Clarke. His television work includes *The Sweeney: Jackpot* (1975) and *The New Avengers: House Of Cards* (1976).

**BRIAN DEACON** plays John, one of the holiday-makers who ignores all the danger signals and ultimately becomes a victim of the Vampires. Once married to Rula Lenska, Brian has worked consistently on the stage and in television. He appeared in the classic mid-70's series *The Feathered Serpent* and an episode in the TV series *Hammer House Of Mystery And Suspense (And The Wall Came Tumbling Down, 1984)*. Most recently he became a household face as a semi-regular in ITV's hugely popular soap *Emmerdale*. His other films include *Triple Echo* (1973), *Il Baccio* (1974), *Jesus*

(Top): Beautiful Marianne Morris—1994





Cornered! Anulka as Miriam in a publicity shot for VAMPYRES

(1979), *Separate Tables* (1983), *Nelly's Version* (1983), and *A Zed And Two Noughts* (1985) in which he worked with his similar-looking brother Eric.

**SALLY FAULKNER** plays Harriet, John's wife. She tries to warn her husband of the overwhelming danger she senses, but is brutally slain at the film's climax. Having trained at RADA, Sally has also featured in *Hot Millions* (1968), *The Body Stealers* (aka *Invasion Of The Body Stealers*, 1969), Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1971), *Layout For 5 Models* (1972), *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight* (1975), *Confessions Of A Driving Instructor* (1976), *Alien Prey* (aka *Prey*, 1978), *Confessions From The David Galaxy Affair* (aka *Confessions Of The Naughty Nymphs*, aka *Secrets Of A Girl Friday*, aka *Secrets Of A Sexy Game*, aka *Star Sex*, 1979) with the late great Mary Millington, *The Jaguar Lives* (1979) with

Christopher Lee and Barbara Bach, and *The Fool* (1990). On TV she appeared in *Dr. Who: The Invasion* (1968) and *The Return Of Sherlock Holmes: Silver Blaze* (1987), and most recently has featured in such shows as *Emmerdale* with *Vampyres* husband Brian Deacon, *Kinsey*, *The Bill*, *Just Good Friends*, *House Of Cards*, *Love Hurts* and *EastEnders*.

**KARL LANCHBURY** plays Rupert, perhaps the most unfortunate of the Vampyre victims; kept alive by Miriam until Fran can join her, he is torn apart in a frenzied bloodbath. Karl retired from acting shortly after the film was released: "Nothing to do with *Vampyres*," he's quick to point out, although José Larraz, who remains friends with him today, jokes, "Maybe the Vampyres sucked so much blood from him that he had to retire. Poor Karl!". In actuality, having been acting since the age of 13, Karl



became frustrated with the whole business and he now runs a bar in Black Awton, near Dartmouth.

Karl's other film roles include *The Webster Boy* (1962), *What's Good For The Goose* (aka *Girl Trouble*, 1969), three others with José Larraz, *Whirlpool* (aka *She Died With Her Boots On*, 1969), *Deviation* (1971) and *Scream And Die* (aka *The House That Vanished*, aka *Psycho Sex*, 1973), and *Erotic Inferno* (aka *Adam And Nicole: Naked And Willing*, 1975). His earlier TV work included *Out Of The Unknown: Thirteen To Centaurus* (1965).

**MICHAEL BYRNE** plays the wine-loving playboy who also meets a grisly fate when he crosses paths with Fran and Miriam. His extensive film credits include *The Scarlet Blade* (aka *The Crimson Blade*, 1963), *Silent Playground* (1963), *Henry VIII And His Six Wives* (1972), *Force 10 From Navarone* (1978), *Briscoe* (1978), *Silence Of The Sea* (1979), *Lamb To The Slaughter* (1979), *Two Gentlemen Of Verona* (1983). On television he's appeared in *Rogue Male* (1976), several episodes of *The Professionals* (1976-77), *Smiley's People* (1982), *A Sort Of Innocence* (1987), *Saracen* (1989), *The Advocates* (1990), *The Orchid House* (1991) and *Running Late* (1992). During 1993/94 he appeared in several of the *Sharpe* TV movies.

**MARGARET HEALD** plays the receptionist at the hotel where Ted checks in for the night. Her other film roles include *Man At The Top* (1973) and two of the many Seventies British sex

comedies, *Confessions Of A Pop Performer* (1975) and *Rosie Dixon Night Nurse* (1977).

**BESSIE LOVE** appears briefly at the conclusion of the film as the American lady, prospective new owner of the mansion. Bessie started making films at the age of eighteen, and became one of Hollywood's great beauties of the silent screen. From 1916 onwards she made upwards of 120 films — almost 100 of them before 1930! She came to England in the early Thirties and her acting from then on mainly took the form of cameo appearances; although she continued working almost until her death, aged 88, in 1986, in her later years she also began a successful writing career. Just a few of the renowned films in which she appeared (though not necessarily representative of her screen-time within them) are *Intolerance* (1916), *The Sea Lion* (1929), *The Lost World* (1925), *The Broadway Melody* (1929) for which she was nominated for an academy award, *The Magic Box* (1951), *The Barefoot Contessa* (1955), *The Story Of Esther Costello* (aka *The Golden Virgin*, 1957), *Children Of The Damned* (1963), *Battle Beneath The Earth* (1967), *Isadora* (aka *The Lovers Of Isadora*, 1969), *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969) sharing scenes with *Vampyres* co-star Elliott Sullivan, *Sunday, Bloody Sunday* (1971), *Catlow* (1971), *Ragtime* (1981), *Reds* (1981), *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1981) and *The Hunger* (1984), the latter featuring Catherine Deneuve as a vampire with lesbian tendencies named Miriam! Bessie also appeared in several popular TV shows, including *Randall And Hopkirk [Deceased]: When Did You Start To Stop Seeing Things?* (1969).

**ELLIOTT SULLIVAN** plays the American lady's husband, clearly enticed by the idea of owning a haunted mansion. His other films include *The Saint's Double Trouble* (1940), *They Won't*

(Top): A nasty death greets Karl Lanchbury when he dares to share a bed with the Vampyres



*As the prospective purchasers of the mansion, Bessie Love and Elliott Sullivan are attracted by the prestige associated with having ghosts in residence. Five years prior to VAMPYRES the couple appeared together in the 007 movie On Her Majesty's Secret Service*

Forget (1937), Next Time I Marry (1938), The Sergeant (1968), On Her Majesty's Secret Service (1969) in which he appears with his 'wife' in Vampyres, Bessie Love, Fear Is The Key (1972), The Spikes Gang (1974) and The President's Last Tape (1974). His TV work includes The Resistible Rise Of Arturo UI: The Gangster Show (1972), Anne Of Green Gables (1972) and Cat And Mouse (1974). "They only worked for a morning," comments José Larraz on the cameo appearance by the two American stars. "Well, more like a quarter of an hour!", he chuckles.

**GERALD CASE** is the Estate Agent who has to warn Ted off the private property that he's showing off to his American clients. Among his other films are Museum Mystery (1937), The Lion Has Wings (1939), In Which We Serve (1942),

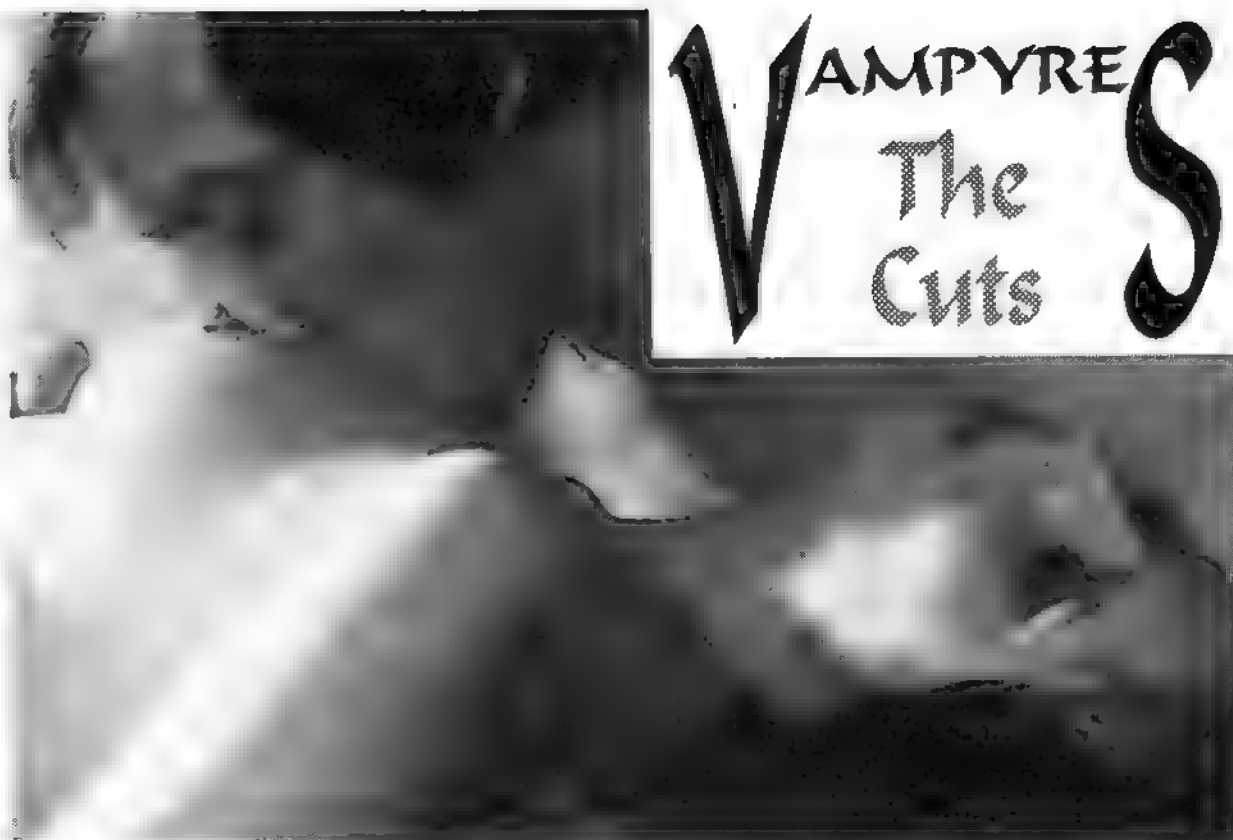
Henry V (1944), Assassin For Hire (1951), The Fake (1953), Night Plane To Amsterdam (1955), The Carrington School Mystery (1958), Bomb In The High Street (1963), Accidental Death (1963), The Third Secret (1964), Runaway Railway (1965) and The Elephant Man (1980). He also worked on British television in Ace Of Wands: The Mind Robbers (1970), Shoulder To Shoulder: Annie Kennedy (1974), The Glittering Prizes (1976), Marie Curie (1977) and The Chronicles: For The Love Of Egypt (1982).

**DOUGLAS JONES** appears as the Hotel Manager, convinced that Ted has stayed at his hotel many years previous. No other credits are known.



*(Top): A publicity shot depicting a moment of tenderness between the Vampyre girls  
(Bottom): The oft-seen photograph of the Vampyres inside John and Harriet's caravan, something not actually seen in the film. Maybe a scene removed at the editing stage? José Larraz says that it was nothing more than a publicity shot*





For the British X certificate release of *Vampyres*, cuts totalling almost 3 minutes were implemented. With times noted to the nearest second, these cuts comprised the following:

- \* The opening pre-credits murder of Fran and Miriam was trimmed back by 14 seconds, from 21 seconds to 7 seconds, reducing the number of gunshots fired from eight to five and deleting several shots of the dying blood-spattered bodies.
- \* The first bout of sexual activity between Fran and Ted was reduced by 40 seconds, eradicating additional footage with Fran reverse straddling Ted as he reaches round and fondles her breasts, and their mutual thrashing to climax in the missionary position.
- \* Fran licking the wound on Ted's arm was cut down by 22 seconds, from 37 seconds to 15 seconds. This deleted additional shots of blood-sucking, interrupted as Fran leans over and kisses the semi-conscious Ted, smearing his mouth with his own blood.
- \* The death of Rupert was reduced by 26 seconds, from 48 seconds to 22 seconds, losing shots of his body writhing in agony on the bed, plus several close-ups of the Vampyre girls tearing at him and lapping the blood from his wounds.
- \* The sequence in which Fran allows Miriam a taste of Ted's blood was trimmed back from 2 minutes and 56 seconds to 2 minutes and 11 seconds. The 45 seconds of cut material included additional blood-licking with the girls pausing frequently to kiss each other, and a large chunk of their sapphic coupling beside the semi-conscious Ted.

- \* The death of John was reduced by 19 seconds, from 39 seconds to 20 seconds, omitting close-up shots of his death spasms as the two girls lap blood from his wounds.
- \* The brutal slaying of Harriet was cut back from 41 seconds to 31 seconds, omitting 10 seconds of her prolonged terrified screams as Miriam forcibly restrains her for sacrifice to Fran's knife.

Viewing the film in its uncut form is a completely different experience to sitting through the emasculated version. The lingering, expanded death scenes are harrowing and — particularly in the case of Rupert's — very difficult to watch, and some of the sex sequences paddle the risky middle water between soft core and hard core. With substantial cuts having been made to the British release prints of a couple of his earlier films, *Whirlpool* and *Symptoms*, there can have been little doubt in José Larraz' mind during shooting that there was no way his film would be granted a certificate in this country without be subjected to cuts. In fact, as Larraz himself admits, considering the time, the censor (Stephen Murphy) was very accommodating.

Almost everywhere else in the world — including Larraz' native Spain, where the film was released as *Las Hijas De Dracula* — *Vampyres* was seen in its entirety.



(Opposite): The sexual content of *VAMPIRES* proved to be more explicit than the British censor would tolerate, subsequently totalling almost two thirds of the footage cut from the film  
(Above): The frenzied murder of John was halved for the film's British release



Far more horrifying than Fran and Miriam hacking Rupert apart was the British censor hacking this scene apart. The death of Rupert — seen stomach-churningly intact in overseas prints — was one of several violent scenes in *VAMPYRES* trimmed down for the British release. Judging from these photos perhaps it's just as well...



The sadistic mental anguish inflicted on Harriet during her last moments of life (above) and the curious eroticism of the scene in which the Vampyres share Ted's blood (below) were two more sequences drastically shortened for the film's British release





# VAMPIRE S on the Home Screen

## U.K. FILM

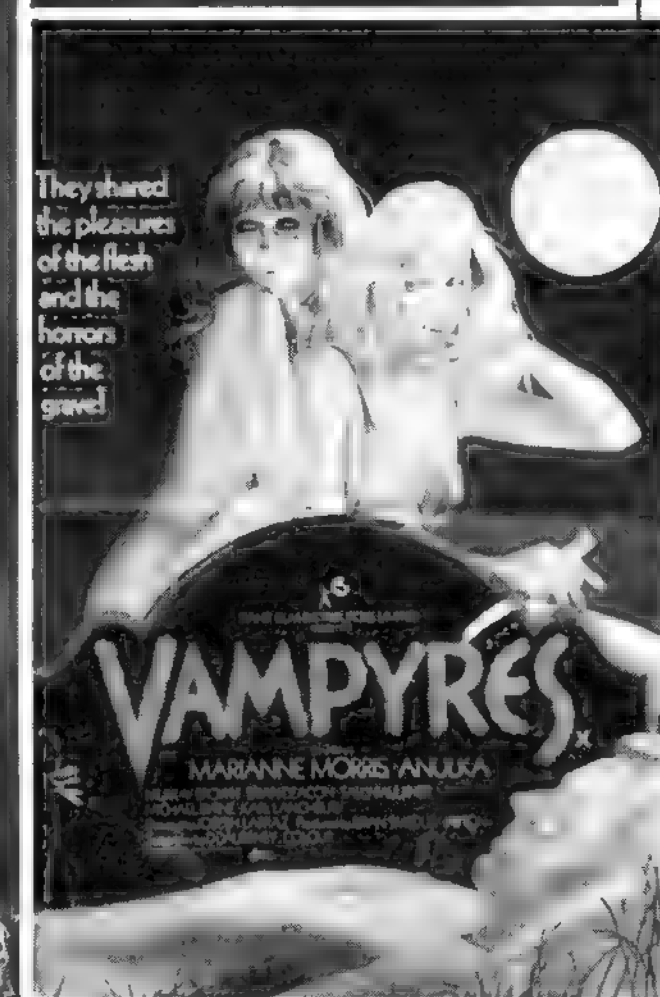
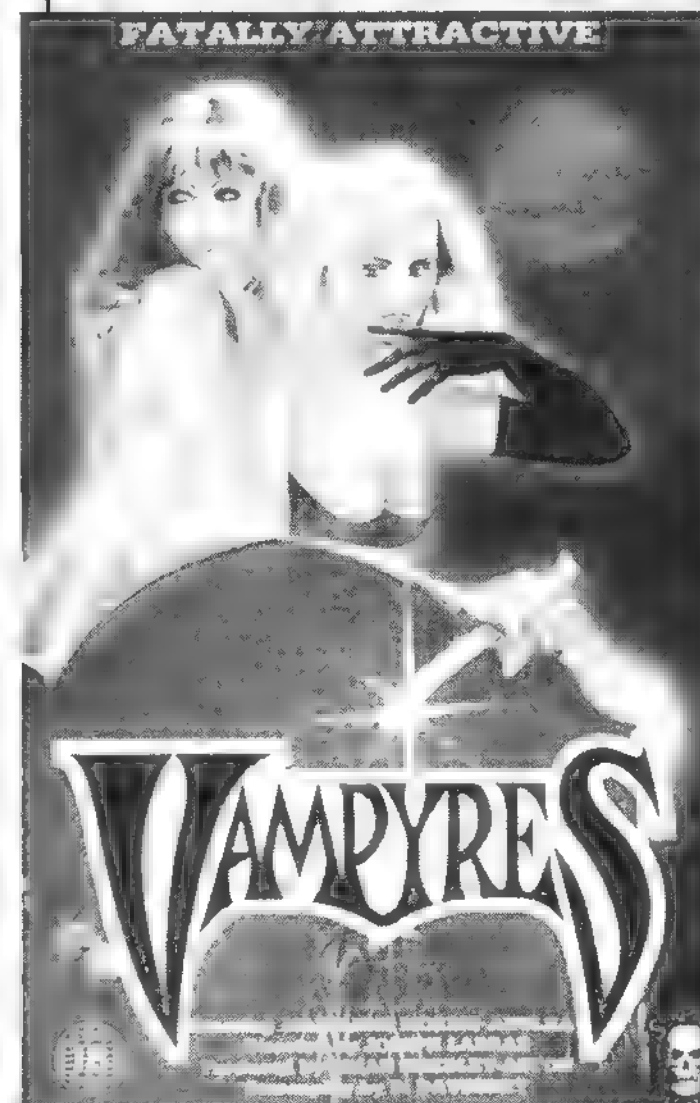
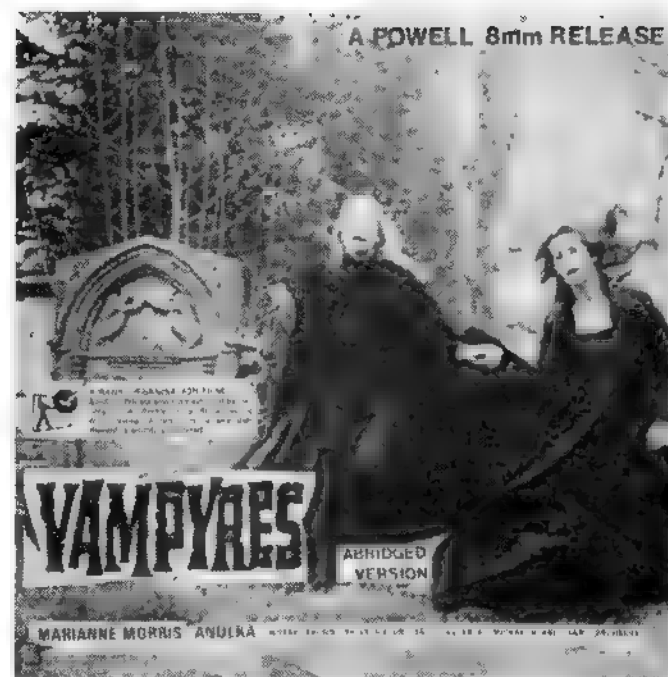
Shortly after its cinematic run, *Vampyres* became available for domestic rental on 16mm (in the same trimmed form as that which played the cinemas) from the Rank Film Library.

Then in 1978 Powell Films released the film on the Super 8mm gauge, abridged to approximately 73 minutes. This was in the days just prior to the rise in popularity of home video and 8mm prints were available for sale; a must for *Vampyres*oholics, although the price tag of over £75 — not cheap now, but a lot of money then — made it prohibitive to all but the most affluent. It could however also be rented from various outlets that dealt with then-popular 8mm hire. The reasoning behind the abridgement was nothing to do with the film's content, rather it being standard practice at the time, allowing feature films to fit onto four 400 ft. spools.

For the purposes of the abridgement, rather than tampering with various short sequences throughout the film — frequently the case with 8mm releases of the time — Powell's editor opted to remove one long chunk, beginning with the introduction of John and Harriet and continuing right through to their first morning in the grounds of the mansion. This hefty excision, with a running time of just over 8 minutes omits the following from the film: Harriet and John driving along and their first sight of the Vampyre girls at the roadside; the Mini stopping to pick up Fran; Harriet and John arriving at their camping spot and their late night conversation, during which they notice activity and a light on in the mansion; Harriet's dream in which she again sees the girls standing at the roadside; Harriet waking to the sound of a scream from the house, then being startled by a hand appearing outside the window; John checking outside in the pouring rain for the suspected intruder; Harriet waking early next morning and seeing the Vampyre girls hurrying through the woods; the emergency services attending the crashed Mini and its dead driver; Harriet and John's conversation over breakfast and, finally, the shots of her painting whilst he sits by the lake fishing. Considering the amount of footage involved, the only plot inconsistency left in the wake of its removal is that the first time John and Harriet are now seen is when they observe Fran and Ted's arrival at the mansion, and the discussion they have indicates that they've encountered Fran at some earlier point in the story.

Within a year of release Powell's magazine advertising for the film had gone awry, mis-naming *all* the film's stars, Marienna Morris, Anoulka and, most unfortunate of all, Marie Brown.

Also available on 8mm in both colour and slightly cheaper black and white format from Powell was an 18 minute 'digest' version. One can always find *something* to criticise about digest reels, but



(Above): Powell's packaging for their 1978 8mm abridgement

(Opposite top): Rank's saucy 1981 British video release sleeve (left). "They're Lost Girls"—the video sleeve for Magnum Entertainment's 1988 American release (right)

(Opposite bottom): Playing down the sex but accentuating the violence? When Cineplex reissued VAMPYRES on tape in Britain (left) the design of the film's original poster (right) was adapted, substituting Anulka's diaphanous nightie for a low-cut evening gown and elbow-length gloves, and Marianne's nudity with a strategically pencilled-in nightgown. Yet a savage glint has been added to the curved dagger in Anulka's hand! The design was adapted yet again for the M.I.A. reissue

this is actually better than most. After a brief snatch of the opening credits we see Fran thumbing a lift from Ted. They arrive at the mansion (observed by Harriet and John) and, after enjoying a glass of wine, they make love. We then see Ted roaming the house and getting locked in the cellar, Miriam and Fran later arriving to free him. There follows a small portion of the *menage à trois*, after which Miriam and Fran are seen picking the playboy up at roadside. Harriet and John make love as the playboy is slaughtered in the cellar and Ted escapes to the caravan. The Vampyres appear and kill John and Harriet and the reel finishes with Ted being woken by the Estate Agent and the full original closing credits. The only criticism of this otherwise fine condensation would be that several minutes of its running time are wasted on the sequence where Ted roams the house (this footage could have been used for something far more exciting, for example the introduction and murder of Rupert), and the inclusion of the closing credits which, of course, names cast members who do not appear in this digest reel.

#### U.K. VIDEO

In 1981 Rank premiered the film on video cassette in VHS and Betamax format (catalogue no. 2008). This was, as far as can be ascertained, the same as the British X certificate cinema release, devoid of almost 3 minutes of sex and violence (detailed in *Vampyres: The Cuts*).

Several scenes from the film are featured on Leisure View Video's *Stephen King's This Is Horror* Volume 1 (catalogue no. LVV291), namely the girls meeting the playboy and his subsequent murder in the wine cellar, Fran licking the blood from Ted's arm, and the frenzied attack on Rupert. Of note is the fact that the latter two sequences are presented in their original uncut form. Although of U.S. origin, *This Is Horror* carries a British 18 certificate, yet in all the British cassette releases of *Vampyres* to date (which also carry the 18 certificate), these scenes remain emasculated.

In 1988 Cineplex reissued the film as part of their 'Scream Show' series on VHS only (catalogue no. CPX156). Their version was further trimmed by approximately 25 seconds for its 18 certificate; the opening murder of Fran and Miriam (originally trimmed from 21 to 7 seconds) was reduced to just 3 seconds, and the death of Harriet (originally cut from 41 to 31 seconds) now lasted only 10 seconds.

M.I.A. re-issued the same version in 1989 (catalogue no. V3276) with minor amendments to the Cineplex packaging.

Redemption, the last true bastion of hope for genre video collectors in Britain, included *Vampyres* on their proposed 1994 release schedule (presumably in what would have been a sub-licencing deal with Rank) but they were not able to secure the rights. At the time of writing the film is not available on tape in the U.K.

#### U.S.A. VIDEO

In America *Vampyres* has been released in many different versions, under several alternative titles, on as many different labels! Known releases include *Blood Hunger* on the Lettuce Entertain You label, and *Satan's Daughters* from Majestic Home Video. According to a snippet in Tim Lucas' invaluable "Video Watchdog" magazine, the latter apparently utilised a cheap computer generated titles sequence that also rather cheekily pilfered clips from Hammer's *The Vampire Lovers*.

The most accessible tapes came from Magnum Entertainment who released the film under its original title on VHS in R-Rated (catalogue no. MW13165R) and Unrated (catalogue no. ME13165U) versions. The R-Rated tape is virtually the same as the original Rank British release. The Unrated tape is vaunted as being uncut; although this is true where the sex and violence is concerned, it is curiously missing the short sequence from the close of the film in which Ted is confronted by the Estate Agent. The trimming of this sequence from 1 minute and 11 seconds to just 22 seconds omits 49 seconds of dialogue during which the Estate Agent chastises Ted for trespassing and he drives away mystified (in short eliminating Ted's presence from the final scene completely), and part of the dialogue in which the American couple enthuse over the prospect of owning a house with ghosts in residence. The opening title consists of a simple "Lee Hessel presents *Vampyres*", with the remainder of the original distinctive opening credits sequence having been entirely removed and grafted on to the end of the film. James Clarke's nerve-jangling titles theme was also replaced with a euphonious, if rather ill-fitting melody.

Magnum's packaging was catch-lined "They're Lost Girls", the slogan clearly designed to cash in on the then-current hit vampire movie *The Lost Boys*.

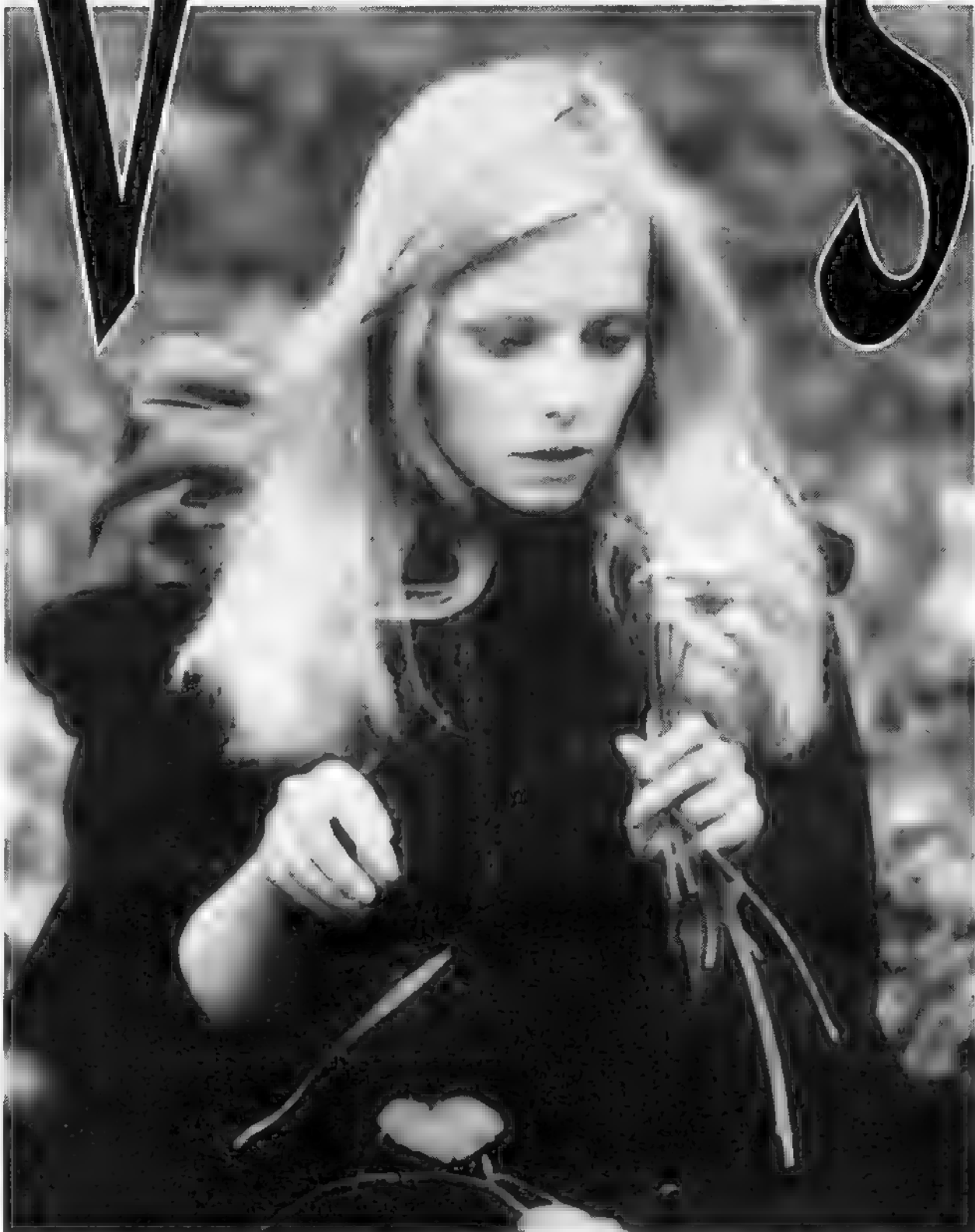
It wouldn't be surprising to find as many different edits of *Vampyres* worldwide as there are titles for it. The bottom line is that it remains as powerful a viewing experience — in any of its versions — even today, twenty years after it was made. The cult status of *Vampyres* is truly deserved.



Their lips are moist and very red! A flyer promoting the arrival of VAMPYRES in France



# VAMPIRES



## PHOTO GALLERY

























**"Vampyres" conceived, written, typeset and designed by Tim Greaves**

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All illustrations contained herein are copyright their respective owners.

*I dedicate this revised edition to all the people who worked so hard to give the world VAMPYRES — in particular the masterminds, José Larraz and Brian Smedley-Aston — and, of course, those delectable Vampyre girls Marianne Morris and Anulka Dziubinska*

**All correspondence to:  
Tim Greaves, 118 High Street, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 5LR, England**



*Would YOU recognise these women? Deliriously tawdry and rather misleading Spanish release artwork*



REVISED SECOND EDITION

*"I always associate the vampire with brutality. I don't believe in that romantic kind of vampire. When I put these two girls in those parts I imagined them like two wild animals, urgently taking the blood they need. That is why my film is so brutal."*

*José Larraz*

Critics have described it as everything from utter dross to sheer brilliance, employing all manner of colourful phraseology in between. Yet one cannot ignore the cult status that *Vampyres* has achieved since director José Ramon Larraz first unleashed it on cinema audiences across the world back in 1974.

This booklet presents a long overdue tribute to the film, comprising a full synopsis, behind the scenes information, details of the cuts inflicted upon it, and many rare and exciting photographic images.

